

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 NSC-10 VO-03 SCA-01 CPR-02

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SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT IN CONDITIONS FOR CORRESPONDENTS

REF: A. MOSCOW 8590, B. MOSCOW 5034, C. STATE 142096

1. MFA PRESS DIVISION COUNSELOR B. D. PYADISHEV, IN MEETING WITH EMBASSY PRESS OFFICER AUGUST 8, SAID IT WAS TOO SOON TO ANSWER "COMPLICATED QUESTIONS" IN NON-PAPER DELIVERED JULY 17 (REFTEL A) BUT EMPHASIZED THEY UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION AND BEING APPROACHED "FROM POSITION OF GOODWILL (BLAGOZHATEL'NOST)." PYADISHEV, WITH COUNSELOR F.S. FEDERENCKO ALSO PRESENT, DECLINED TO ESTIMATE WHEN ANSWERS MIGHT BE READY, STATING THAT "OTHER ORGANIZATIONS" ALSO HAD TO RESPOND

2. NEVERTHELESS EMBOFF WENT OVER NON-PAPER AND OTHER POINTS AS BELOW. (P&C COUNSELOR HAD REQUESTED MEETING WITH DIVISION CHIEF SOFINSKIY IN ORDER BE ABLE CONVEY HIS REACTION TO WASHINGTON BUT SOFINSKIY REPORTEDLY TOO BUSY.) AT CLOSE OF VISIT, PYADISHEV WAS ASKED TO SUGGEST SUITABLE MFA OFFICIAL IF CHARGE WISHED HIMSELF TO FOLLOW UP NON-PAPER AND DIPLOMATIC NOTE ON MULTIPLE EXIT-ENTRY VISAS (REFTEL B). TAKEN ABACK, HE LEFT THIS TO CHARGE, BUT UNDERLINED

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IT SHOULD BE "RIGHT MAN AND RIGHT TIME," IMPLYING SUCH

A CALL IN NEAR FUTURE WOULD BE PREMATURE, IN HIS OPINION.

3. ON NON-PAPER ITEMS, PYADISHEV RESPONDED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) INTERNAL TRAVEL: CITED NUMBER OF TRIPS OVER PAST SIX MONTHS, INCLUDING UNUSUAL RECENT THREE-DAY STAY IN UKRAINIAN TOWN BY FROMSON OF CBS, AS EVIDENCE U.S. CORRESPONDENTS BETTER TREATED THAN ANY OTHER GROUP;

(B) EXTERNAL TRAVEL: DECLARED NO CORRESPONDENT EVER UNABLE TO GET EXIT VISA WHEN NEEDED, ALTHOUGH CONCEDED THAT MULTIPLE EXIT-ENTRY VISAS WOULD SAVE THEM WORK AND HEADACHES;

(C) ACCESS TO NEWS SOURCES: DECLARED MUCH IMPROVEMENT EFFECTED; WHEN RECENT PROBLEMS WITH SMITH OF NEW YORK TIMES AND OTHERS CITED (REFTEL A), AND IMPORTANCE OF TIMES EMPHASIZED, PYADISHEV CONTENTED SUBJECT ALREADY DISCUSSED AND NO NEED TAKE UP FURTHER;

(D) GENERAL APPROACH AND NUMBERS: RESPONSE TO U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT BUREAU APPLICATION EXPECTED IN SEVERAL DAYS; "AS GENERAL DECLARATION, WE CAN WITH ENTHUSIASM HELP OBJECTIVE JOURNALISTS." ASKED IF THIS MEANT SPECIFIC CORRESPONDENTS WERE SO IDENTIFIED, PYADISHEV HASTENED TO SAY NO, WHILE FEDERENKO MADE STANDARD OBSERVATION THAT MANY STORIES "HINDER (PREPYATSTOVVAT)" MUTUAL RELATIONS. EMBOFF, NOTING JOINT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES OF US AND USSR GOVERNMENTS AND PRESS, CALLED ATTENTION TO OVERALL INCREASE IN WHAT COULD BE CALLED "POSITIVE" STORIES FOLLOWING APPRECIATED RECENT IMPROVEMENT IN SOME ASPECTS OF CORRESPONDENTS TRAVEL AND ACCESS. BOTH COUNSELORS NODDED HEADS IN AGREEMENT.

4. FEDERENKO SAID BOTH MFA AND HYDROMET APPROVE TRAVEL FOR ONE CORRESPONDENT WITH WATER POLLUTION SUB-GROUP (REFTEL C). RUSSELL JONES OF ABC REQUESTING PERMISSION FROM HOME OFFICE AUG. 9 TO ACCOMPANY. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS.

5. COMMENT: WHILE NO FORMAL ANSWER GIVEN NOR TO BE EXPECTED IN NEAR FUTURE ON NON-PAPER POINTS, WORTH NOTING THAT MFA TRIED TO PUT GOOD FACE ON THEIR DELIBERATIONS AND ASSURE US THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CORRESPONDENTS BOTH GETTING BETTER TREATMENT IN RECENT PERIOD AND CAN EXPECT MORE OF SAME. SINCE NON-PAPER TRANSMITTED JULY 17, SOVIETS IN VIEW OF OVERALL TRACK RECORD OF RESPONDING TO SUCH MATTERS HAVE BASIS TO ARGUE THAT THIS TOO SOON TO ANSWER. HOWEVER, EMBASSY PLANS FOLLOW UP DIPLOMATIC NOTE ON MULTIPLE EXIT-ENTRY VISA REQUEST (SENT APRIL 26) WITH WRITTEN REMINDER. FIALING RESPONSE TO THIS OR NON-PAPER BY BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER, CHARGE COULD REQUEST CALL ON APPROPRIATE DIPUTY MINISTER. IN

MEANTIME EMBOFFS IN INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH MFA OFFICIALS WILL
EXPRESS OUR INTEREST IN GETTING A RESPONSE AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE
TIME.
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